

# *Proclamation*

In 1939, when Lou Gehrig gave his famous speech from home plate in Yankee Stadium, the disease he was afflicted with was entirely unknown. Although Lou Gherig succumbed to his disease two years later, the legacy of his courage and desire to find a cure lives on. That speech marked a turning point in awareness and the beginning of a crusade to find a cure for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a rapidly progressive and highly fatal neuromuscular disease that attacks the nerve cells in the spinal cord controlling voluntary muscles throughout the body, causing these muscles to stop receiving signals, lose strength, atrophy and eventually die.

Over 30,000 people in the United States currently have ALS, which results in complete paralysis and death, generally within three to five years of diagnosis. The number of people with ALS remains constant with over 5,000 new cases diagnosed annually.

In Hawai'i, approximately 24 new cases are reported each year and an average of 74 people have the disease at any given time.

At least 90 percent of these cases strike people with no family history of the disease. In advanced stages, ALS can cost up to \$200,000 a year with patients requiring around-the-clock nursing care. Unless the patient can afford to hire a full or part time nurse, the responsibility typically falls on the family to provide the necessary assistance.

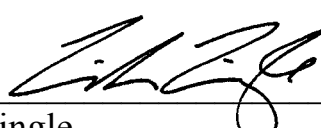
Though positive steps are being made in research, and groups like The ALS Association and the Muscular Dystrophy Association offer a wide range of support services, there is still no known cause or cure. The suffering of patients and the anguish and struggle of their caregivers must be supported and alleviated as much as possible.

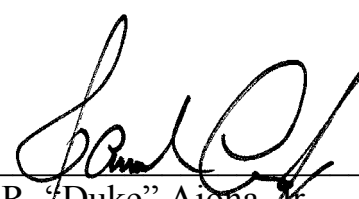
THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor of the State of Hawai'i, and I, James "Duke" Aiona, Jr., Lieutenant Governor, do hereby proclaim May 2006 as

## **ALS AWARENESS MONTH**

in the Aloha State, and urge all citizens to learn more about ALS and lend their support, awareness and advocacy in combating this disease.

**DONE** at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this seventeenth day of May 2006

  
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Linda Lingle  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

  
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James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.  
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i